

OTR 80-1045

9 APR 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration

FROM:


Deputy Director of Training

SUBJECT: Status Report On Activities of the
History Advisory Committee

1. Attached at Tab A is a status report on the activities of the History Advisory Committee which you established in January of this year.

2. Also attached (at Tab B) is a copy of a memorandum dictated by the DCI which speaks in part to the work of the Committee. Hopefully, the status report is responsive to the question posed by the DCI.

Attachments
As Stated

Distribution:

Orig - Addressee w att
1 - DDTR Chrono
1 - OTR Registry
1 - DDTR HAC File

OTR/DDTR:ms 9 April 1980

STATUS OF THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE
HISTORY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. The History Advisory Committee held its organizational meeting on the 25th of January 1980. At this meeting it was agreed that the Committee first would have to familiarize itself with the Agency's History Program and related activities of recent years, then hear from Agency officials presently interested in the subject of the History Program and, finally, attempt to determine a proper scope and role for a future History Program. The Committee members felt that, until they had themselves reached a degree of familiarity with the problems, it would be premature to bring in outside consultants and experts. However, in anticipation of that point in the future where outside advice would be desirable, it was agreed to initiate clearance proceedings on [redacted]

STAT is a historian who has had extensive experience with the Department of Defense History Program, has served on the staff of the National War College, and who counts among his publications -- "The Patton Papers." As a working policy the Committee decided that any search for a qualified historian to serve as the Chief of the CIA History Program should be deferred until a more defined concept of an Agency History Program was developed.

2. At separate meetings the Committee met with Mr. Walter Elder, who had served as Chief of the History Staff under Executive Director Colby and subsequently under the DDA, and with Mr. Jack Pfeiffer, who managed the program between the departure of Mr. Elder and the end of 1979. In these meetings the Committee heard that the Agency History Program was given considerable management support and was allocated adequate staff and contract resources during the period 1969-1973. A unit comprised of [redacted] staff employees, [redacted] contract employees and [redacted] consultant managed a rather extensive program which involved the production of both organizational and topical histories or portions of histories dealing with matters with which they had personal experience. During this period, the History Staff received that emphasis and attention which results from an effort having the personal support of the office of the Director.

3. In 1973 the History Staff was moved from the Office of the DCI to the Office of the DDA, and that organizational change signaled the beginning of a period of decreasing emphasis and

resources. Between 1973 and 1979, most if not all of the work that had been done to establish and maintain systems for the identification and indexing of historical documents ceased. Personnel positions were steadily reduced in the course of various personnel cuts until by 1975, only [] positions remained and of these, only one provided for a professional historian. With the exception of a portion of a history of the Bay of Pigs, production of histories as such, ceased. Concurrent with the decrease of emphasis and resources, there was a continuing requirement for responsiveness to outside scholars, investigators and components of the government engaged in routine oversight. The Committee concluded that it was engaged in the review of a program which at present represents but minimal commitment and only a meager effort to record the Agency's story in any professional manner.

STAT

4. To get a better feel for what requirements exist concurrently for a History Program, the Committee has met with Mr. Hal Ford, immediately upon his return from his service with the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and with [] of the Office of Public Affairs. Both of these officers, even though regarding the problem from differing perspectives, have underscored the need for an objective and professional recording of the Agency's History. In the case of Congress, Mr. Ford pointed out that there is considerable interest in insuring that the Agency has the means of learning on a continuing basis from its past successes or failures. Aside from any obligation we may have to scholars there is the obligation we have to ourselves to take proper advantage of the priceless lessons of the past. [] from his vantage point, sees a viable History Program as a more efficient and safe means of providing organized and analyzed information in response to requests from the public. Currently, many such requirements for information or background are assembled hastily and with inadequate attention to objectivity and to the protection of sensitive information.

STAT

STAT

5. In a most recent meeting the Committee received an in-depth briefing from [] on the Historical Intelligence Collection and its important role in supporting the activities of numerous Agency components. While not necessarily an integral part of the program for the writing of Agency histories, the Historical Intelligence Collection nonetheless cannot be separated from such a program nor can it be excluded from any planning for the future of such an effort.

STAT

In immediately upcoming meetings, it is planned to hear from a senior officer of the DDO to gain an understanding of the complex security and compartmentation problems which relate to any Agency-wide History Program and then to address specific questions which need resolution prior to getting involved in preparing recommendations for a future program. Some examples of such questions would include:

Should the Agency have as a goal the publication of at least some history to place in the public domain?

Should histories be prepared primarily with a topical orientation or should an organizational approach be maintained?

Should we employ outside historians from the academic community to obtain demonstrable objectivity and professionalism in our histories?

Where organizationally should a history staff or program be placed to insure that it receives the attention it warrants and attracts the right kind of people?

How do we implement a professional and non-parochial program and still maintain high standards of security and compartmentation?

To what extent should a history program relate to components such as CSI, The Historical Intelligence Collection, the publication -- STUDIES IN INTELLIGENCE, Records Management programs, etc.?

It is obvious both from the people with whom the Committee has met and the numerous phone calls that have been received by Committee members since the publication of the Agency's notice establishing the Committee, that there is wide-spread and unexpected interest both within and without the Agency on the subject of how CIA is going to approach the problem of a history program.

6. Consciously, the Committee to date has proceeded at a thoughtful and deliberate pace hoping to avoid some of the precipitous and short term approaches which have served this subject so poorly in the past. It is the hope of the Committee

that it will soon be able to move toward the preparation of specific recommendations which will treat not only the requirements and needs which appear obvious, but also the questions of resources which cannot be ignored. When the Committee has successfully developed such recommendations, it will move promptly to its secondary charge of locating and recommending to management the most qualified candidates to implement such a program. Attached is a copy of the Agency notice establishing the History Advisory Committee and listing its membership.

Page Denied

Next 2 Page(s) In Document Denied